



# OFFICIAL NEWS RELEASE

MISSISSIPPI FORESTRY COMMISSION

301 North Lamar St., Suite 300, Jackson, MS 39201

[www.mfc.state.ms.us](http://www.mfc.state.ms.us)

---

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

*June 24, 2009*

Contact: Kent Grizzard,  
Manager, Forest Protection  
and Information  
(601) 359-2841

### **Hot, Dry Weather Conditions Increase Risk of Wildfire**

Jackson, MS—The hot, dry weather conditions during the month of June have increased the potential for wildfires to occur, especially in the southern part of the state, according to the Mississippi Forestry Commission. As of June 23, the Forestry Commission has suppressed 116 wildfires statewide, with 82 percent of those fires occurring south of Highway 84.

“Not only are we seeing an increase in fire activity, the fire behavior is more intense,” said Mark Hamilton, Southeast District Forester with the Forestry Commission. “The fires are consuming green vegetation and burning deep into the duff layer. This is not normal fire behavior for the month of June.”

Currently, there are bans against open outdoor burning in Forrest, Lamar and Marion Counties. Check with local officials for the current status of a county burn ban. Burn ban information is also posted on the Forestry Commission’s web site: [www.mfc.state.ms.us](http://www.mfc.state.ms.us).

Hot, dry weather is expected to continue over the next 7 to 10 days, with the exception of an occasional afternoon thunderstorm. The Forestry Commission urges the public to keep aware of the dry weather conditions and to use extreme caution when conducting outdoor burning where allowed. In regard to Independence Day celebrations during the first week of July, the commission suggests to be especially careful when disposing coals used in outdoor grills and to provide additional supervision with the use of fireworks.

The Forestry Commission recommends being prepared in case a wildfire threatens your home and property. For example, keep a water hose ready for use, keep leaves and debris at least 30 feet away from your home and other structures, store firewood away from your home, keep your roof clear of leaves and pine straw, post fire emergency numbers on or near your phone, and share these fire safety tips with friends and family.

###